

Clayton Christian
Commissioner of Higher Education
Montana University System

March 4, 2013

Dear Members of the 63rd Legislature,

On behalf of the Montana Board of Regents, I thank you for your service to the citizens of the State of Montana. As you know, Governor Bullock's Jobs and Opportunity by Building Schools (JOBS) bill, HB 14, has passed out of the Joint Subcommittee on Long Range Planning and is now under review by the House Appropriations Committee. Recently, two amendments to HB 14 have been proposed, one of which would locate the Missoula College building at Fort Missoula, which was determined by The University of Montana to be an unfeasible location for the siting of the full Missoula College campus.

The Fort Missoula site is an unfeasible location for the full Missoula College campus due to the following site challenges:

1. There simply is not enough buildable, University-owned land at Fort Missoula, because of the following combination of site factors:
 - a. **Flood plain** issues reduce the University's buildable area.
 - b. **The old Fort Missoula dump/landfill**, which occupies a portion of the University property, is protected and deemed a historically significant part of Fort Missoula Historic District, (National Register of Historic Places).
 - c. **Artifacts** were found at the old dump site during the archaeological survey of the property. These sensitive archeological issues further constrain building opportunities at this location.
 - d. **The Fort Missoula Historic District** (NRHP) was recently expanded to include the University of Montana property immediately west of the Fort. This designation imposes strict design requirements and process on any proposed development.
2. A Fort Missoula site for the full Missoula College campus presents significant issues regarding a new sewer system. The site would have to be served by new sewer service connection to the city system and would add considerably to the cost of the project.
3. The open space, traffic, and parking issues that are a concern for the university neighborhood are equally important to the Target Range neighborhood and we anticipate a similar response from the neighbors at any location chosen.

The South Campus property, by contrast, poses no historic or archeological challenges and fewer infrastructure and transportation costs. Further, it is owned outright by UM for the use and benefit of the University. Consequently, there is no need to purchase additional acreage.

Passing the JOBS Bill with a mandate for the Missoula College building to be located at Fort Missoula is an empty promise to the students of Missoula College. **If this amendment passes, the building cannot be developed.** We urge you to pass HB 14 without this proposed amendment. The future students of Missoula College deserve access to an affordable, quality education in a building fully suited to train them for the jobs that are driving our Montana economy.

Sincerely,

Clayton Christian
cc: Montana Board of Regents

UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA FORT MISSOULA

